

IN RECOGNITION OF THE SUMMIT
OF HOPE PROGRAM

HON. ROBERT J. DOLD

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 23, 2015

Mr. DOLD. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the Summit of Hope, which has become one of the most successful programs at reducing recidivism in the nation. Too many former inmates leave prison ill-prepared to find work and resume their lives, and the rate at which prisoners return to incarceration is far too high. The economic and human costs associated with high recidivism rates are unacceptable, and we must work for change.

The Summit of Hope is a collaborative effort between the Illinois Department of Corrections, the Illinois Department of Public Health and local organizations throughout the state. In 2014, over 13,000 parolees and probationers received resources and assistance which helps many of them along the path to successful re-entry into society. Overseen by Senior Community Outreach Administrator Marcus King, the Summit of Hope is an example of how we can work together to address our most pressing challenges.

Mr. Speaker, I will be joining Summit of Hope and community leaders at an event in North Chicago, Illinois. I consider it an honor to be a part of their initiative.

COMMEMORATING THE PUBLIC
SERVICE OF TOM PARROTT

HON. SANDER M. LEVIN

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 23, 2015

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, today, I wish to commemorate the public service of Tom Parrott. Tom is retiring from the Social Security Administration after more than four decades of service to the millions of Americans who rely on Social Security. I serve as the Ranking Democrat on the Committee on Ways and Means, and over the years my colleagues and I and our staff have relied heavily on Tom's thoughtful and accurate advice as we crafted Social Security and Supplemental Security Income legislation. We and our constituents owe Tom our thanks for his careful stewardship of their contributions and the benefits they rely on to live.

Tom's roots at Social Security are deep, as his father of the same name and his mother served at SSA before him. In fact, Tom says he can remember polishing the family car so his parents could go to the movies with Mr. and Mrs. Bob Ball.

In January 1975, Tom began his service at Social Security as a claims representative in the Midtown Manhattan district office, before being assigned to the Rochester, New York and, subsequently, Redding, California district offices. In 1980, he was welcomed back to his home town of Baltimore as a policy analyst in the predecessor office of the current Office of Legislation and Congressional Affairs. He then devoted himself for the last 35 years to working on federal legislation, providing impartial and knowledgeable counsel. He has been Acting Deputy Commissioner for Legislation and

Congressional Affairs, and currently serves as Assistant Deputy Commissioner.

Tom's commitment to public service runs deeply. Prior to coming to Social Security, Tom was a VISTA volunteer and later a field health inspector working for the State with migrant farm workers in the potato and apple growing regions of western New York. Tom is a 1972 graduate of Denison University, and completed the Federal Executive Institute's Leadership for a Democratic Society program in 2005. He became a member of the Senior Executive Service in 2008.

As evidenced by his long and successful service in SSA's legislative affairs office, Tom has a keen eye for public policy, understanding the need to balance competing objectives in a politically and operationally workable fashion, and always with the Americans who rely on Social Security firmly in mind. We and our staffs have enjoyed working with Tom—one of his gifts is the ability to retain a calm demeanor and a sense of humor no matter what the situation. We have relied greatly on Tom's assistance and wise counsel over the years. We thank him for his service, and we wish him a well-earned retirement.

HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY
OF MS. JOYCE ANN BROWN

HON. MARC A. VEASEY

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 23, 2015

Mr. VEASEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and legacy of Ms. Joyce Ann Brown of Dallas, Texas. Ms. Brown was wrongly convicted of aggravated robbery in 1980 and unfairly served over nine years in prison despite her innocence. Following her release in 1989, Ms. Brown used her story to fight for justice for those wrongly convicted in Texas and around the country. Her passing on June 13, 2015 leaves a void in the city of Dallas and I join the Texas community in giving our condolences to the Brown family.

Ms. Brown was raised in Dallas, Texas. In 1980, at the age of 33 she was accused of murder after a local robbery turned violent. Despite eyewitness testimony verifying her alibi, Ms. Brown was wrongfully convicted. Following her conviction, Ms. Brown refused to be a victim of her circumstances and fought for a dignified release.

After numerous appeal requests went unanswered, Ms. Brown was finally permitted a retrial and released on bond on November 3, 1989. After being incarcerated for nearly a decade for a crime she did not commit, she was finally able to see her charges dropped on February 14, 1990.

Following her release, Ms. Brown served as an assistant for nine years to Dallas County Commissioner, John Wiley Price and later founded MASS, Mothers/Fathers for the Advancement of Social Systems. Ms. Brown's organization aimed to use her experience and passion to help others who were wrongfully convicted.

Ms. Brown spent the remainder of her life advocating on the behalf of currently and formerly incarcerated populations with the goal of promoting their successful reintegration into society. Her autobiography *Joyce Brown: Justice Denied* remains as a testament to both

the events that led to her wrongful conviction and her commitment to ensuring justice for all following her exoneration.

In honor of Ms. Joyce Ann Brown, a tireless advocate for justice, this statement will be entered into the congressional record on Tuesday, June 23, 2015. She will be remembered as a leader, trailblazer and true public servant for the state of Texas and beyond.

OUR UNCONSCIONABLE NATIONAL
DEBT

HON. MIKE COFFMAN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 23, 2015

Mr. COFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, on January 20, 2009, the day President Obama took office, the national debt was \$10,626,877,048,913.08.

Today, it is \$18,152,689,167,905.61. We've added \$7,525,812,118,992.53 to our debt in 6 years. This is over \$7.5 trillion in debt our nation, our economy, and our children could have avoided with a balanced budget amendment.

REMEMBERING THE LIFE OF MR.
JOHN R. ROZZO

HON. TIM RYAN

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 23, 2015

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Mr. John R. Rozzo. Mr. Rozzo was highly respected within the community for his career as an educator, his dedication to the community, and his love for his friends and family.

John was born on January 17th, 1941 to Samuel and Mary G. Airato Rozzo. He graduated from Girard High School in 1958 and afterwards attended Youngstown State University, where he received his B.S. in Education in 1963. John began teaching social studies and science at St. Edward School in Youngstown in 1962 while working towards his Master's in Education, which he received in 1968 from Westminster College. He eventually went on to serve as principal for St. Edwards School, Our Lady of Mt. Cannel in Niles, St. Dominic Elementary School in Youngstown, and St. Joseph Elementary School in Austintown before retiring in 2011. His legacy as a teacher and administrator lives on through all of his students whose lives he impacted through his work.

Mr. Rozzo was also a highly regarded leader. He was a man who constantly sacrificed his time for his community. As an educator, he served as regional superintendent, member of the Trumbull County Parochial Schools Principal's Advisory Board, the Diocesan Board of Education and Athletic Director. At St. Joseph parish, he was a lector, Eucharistic minister, and leader of prayer. Being the advocate for education that he was, John served as judge and checker for the Vindicator Spelling Bee for over 40 years. He also showed a fierce commitment to the Austintown Girls' Softball league by serving as a president, coach, manager and was inducted as a member of their hall of fame.

St. Joseph Parish named Mr. Rozzo man of the year, a title anyone in the community could agree he undoubtedly deserved. John is survived by his wife of 51 years, the former Janet M. Berard whom he married May 2, 1964; his children, Pamela J. Pasquale, Denise M. Rozzo, Alaina M. Chepke, and John A. Rozzo; his brother and sisters, Phyllis Soroka, Connie Nickell, Anthony Rozzo, Ginny Gustovich and Marilyn Bianco; his aunt, Fran Airato; his 10 grandchildren, his great-granddaughter, Leighton and many nieces, nephews, cousins and friends. John Rozzo leaves behind a great example for all of us to follow as a man of faith, community activism, and true leadership. He will be dearly missed.

THE MISSING BLACK MALE

HON. BARBARA LEE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 23, 2015

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, as the mother of two black men and grandmother of two black boys, we're here to talk about a crisis in our communities: the crisis of missing black men.

In order for us to understand where these men have gone, we must understand the root of the problem. Simply put, too many places in our nation are a tale of two cities. One city is bright, shiny and new—it's home to new condominiums and fancy restaurants. The other city is littered with boarded up stores, abandoned homes, and too many people without a job and without hope.

This disparity did not happen overnight. We've lived with these structural injustices for centuries. But it wasn't until race riots erupted in Watts, Chicago, and Detroit in 1968 that our government began to take notice.

After the riots, President Johnson convened the Kerner Commission to investigate the root causes of the unrest. The Commission found a nation "moving towards two societies, one black, one white, separate and unequal." Tragically, this report could have been written last week. In the last 50 years, these structural injustices have barely budged. And black men are still being pushed out of American society.

According to a New York Times report published in April, there is an estimated 1.5 million black men aged 24–54 who are simply missing from civic life. Let me repeat—one in six black men have disappeared from civic life. 1.5 million black men missing—that can be hard to visualize.

So think about it this way:

There are more African-American men missing nationwide than there are African-American men residing in Los Angeles, Philadelphia, Detroit, Houston, Washington D.C. and Boston, combined. Let me say that again: There are more African American men missing from our society than black men living in Los Angeles, Philadelphia, Detroit, Houston, Washington D.C. and Boston—COMBINED.

Many have been lost to our jails and prisons, which disproportionately incarcerate black men. And others have lost their lives far too young. Some are the victims of homicide; others, the victims of a healthcare system that fails to care for them. This is tragic—but it's hardly surprising. The inequity of opportunity for black men starts at birth.

More than one in three black children are born into poverty. The cycle of poverty continues in school systems that institutionalize discrimination and racial bias. While black students represent just 18 percent of preschool enrollment, they account for 42 percent of preschool student expulsions.

We are talking about kids that are 2–5 years old—these kids don't even get a start, let alone a head start. And this crisis of inequality extends from education to the economy itself. Over the past four decades, the average unemployment rate for blacks has been DOUBLE the rate for white Americans.

And the current unemployment rate for black men over 20 stands at 10.2 percent—that's higher than the national average at the height of the recent recession. For many black men, it feels like there is a permanent recession. In the world's richest and most powerful nation, it is simply inexcusable for the inequities to persist.

Mr. Speaker—this must be our call to action.

We must come together like never before to address the systemic inequalities that are endemic in our nation—inequalities that leave black men behind.

We know that one in six African American men are missing because they are incarcerated or the victims of premature deaths. To start undoing this crisis, we need a coordinated approach including legislation, local programs and broad national initiatives.

We must re-double our support of the President's My Brother's Keeper initiative. I encourage everyone, especially my Congressional colleagues, to encourage your local leaders to engage in this initiative, which builds ladders of opportunity and unlocks the full potential of boys and young men of color through a collaborative public-private partnership.

We must also look for innovation solutions that are currently working in our communities and bring them to the national stage. I am proud that Oakland Unified School District, in my congressional district, is the first school district to have a dedicated department to address the needs of African American male students. And we need more like it across the country.

These national and local initiatives are working but Congress also has a role. It's past time for us to get serious about addressing the lack of opportunity for black men and boys in this country.

Right now—today—in this chamber, there is legislation that can and will start moving the needle.

Legislation that will create real, good-paying jobs—legislation that will give everyone a fair chance at a job—legislation that will ensure a college degree is within reach for everyone, regardless of where they were born or what race they are. Legislation that will bring health equity and reform our broken criminal justice system.

In my role as co-chair of the CBC Task Force on Poverty and the Economy and Chair of the Democratic Whip's Task Force on Poverty, Income Inequality, and Opportunity, I am proud to be working with more than 100 of my colleagues, to advance policies that give black men—and really all Americans—a fair shot

This work includes the Half in Ten Act (H.R. 258)—which would develop a national strategy to cut poverty in half the next decade. That's

more than 22 million Americans lifted out of poverty and into the middle class in just the next 10 years by being strategic and coordinating our existing programs.

We also need to raise the minimum wage—and fight for a living wage because too many Americans are working full time and still struggling to make ends meet.

I am proud to cosponsor Congressman AL GREEN's The Original Living Wage Act (H.R. 122) and Congressman SCOTT's Raise the Wage Act (H.R. 2150), legislation that would increase the minimum wage for federal workers and the national minimum wage to \$12 by 2020, respectively. We also need to fight against the disparities that persist in our health care system. The Affordable Care Act was a good start but more is needed.

For years, the Congressional tri-caucus has championed this effort by introducing The Health Equity and Accountability Act (HEAA). Congresswoman ROBIN KELLY will have the honor in introducing this important legislation this Congress and I am proud to co-lead this effort as co-chair of the CAPAC Health Task Force.

This important legislation builds on the Affordable Care Act and puts us on track to eliminate health disparities in our country.

Lastly, we need to empower communities to build greater trust between law enforcement and communities of color. And we need to address chronic recidivism, which would be a huge step towards returning some of our "missing" men home to their families and communities.

That is why Congress should pass the bipartisan Stop Militarizing Law Enforcement Act (H.R. 1232), which I am a proud cosponsor of, to stop the militarization of our nation's police forces.

We need to pass the Police Accountability Act (H.R. 1102) and the Grand Jury Reform Act (H.R. 429) so we can ensure that deadly force cases are heard by a judge and there is more accountability among police officers.

I was also proud to lead a letter, signed by 72 of my colleagues, urging the President to adopt a fair chance hiring policy at the federal level for individuals who have been previously incarcerated. A fair chance hiring policy would level the playing field and help stop the cycle of recidivism that's plaguing our communities.

This is simply the right thing to do: the federal government shouldn't put up barriers to work for those trying to rebuild their lives after making a mistake. It is vital that Congress acts to ensure the tragedies in Ferguson, Staten Island, Oakland—in my district—and now Baltimore are not repeated.

Mr. Speaker, we can end the phenomenon of the missing black male. We must keep calling for action.

As Dr. King said in his "Two Americas" speech that he gave on April 14th, 1968 at Stanford University: 'We must come to see that social progress never rolls in on the wheels of inevitability. It comes through the tireless efforts and the persistent work of dedicated individuals.'

We must each be those dedicated individuals working for the social progress that is so desperately needed.

I urge my colleagues: act and act now—too much is at stake.